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SE Entertainment

HD **Review: Trouble in the Garden has the best of intentions but lacks subtlety; This earnest film stars Cara Gee as Raven, a First Nations eco-activist with much to be angry about**

BY Brad Wheeler

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LP

Trouble in the Garden

Written and directed by Roz Owen

TD

Starring Cara Gee, Jon Cor and Fiona Reid

Classification: 14A/80 minutes

On the one hand, Trouble in the Garden is a modest drama about a dysfunctional family with a buried, unsettling secret. On the other, Trouble in the Garden concerns the Canadian government's taking of Indigenous land and children. You don't need to be Citizen Kane to grasp that the former is a metaphor for the latter. This earnest film stars Cara Gee as Raven, a First Nations eco-activist with much to be angry about. Not only is she jailed for protesting the development of disputed Indigenous land, she ends up serving her house arrest with her white adoptive family from whom she is estranged. Her adoptive father drinks Scotch, wears tartan slacks and just returned with his wife from a trip to Scotland. He is a Canadian proudly of Scottish heritage, and no, writer-director Roz Owen isn't one for subtleties. There's some solid acting in Owen's debut narrative feature, but it comes from actors other than the film's star. (Not that she's given much in the way of crackling lines to deliver.) The best thing you can say about Trouble in the Garden is that it's well-intentioned. Ask a native Canadian about the worth of good intentions.

Trouble in the Garden opens Feb. 15 in Toronto and Calgary.

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IPD film

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